

REMARKS

Claims 43-57 have been cancelled, and claims 58-75 have been newly added. Claims 58-75 are now pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application as amended are respectfully requested.

A new title has been provided, as requested by the Examiner. In addition, proposed changes, shown in red, to Figures 2A-2D, 4, 6A, 6B, 6D-6G, 6I-6K, 7A, 8A, and 9A-9D are enclosed. Applicants ask the Examiner to approve the proposed changes. (It should be noted that at some of the elements shaded to illustrate an insulative material could alternatively be a semiconductor material.) Applicants note that Figures 6C, 6H, 6L, and 7B do not show cross-sectional views and therefore should not be cross-hatched.

Claims 43-57 have been rejected under 35 USC § 112, 1st paragraph. Although applicants have cancelled these claims mooted this rejection, Applicants did not cancel these claims for lack of support for the claims in the specification or other reasons related to patentability. Rather, Applicants cancelled these claims because, as understood by Applicants, the Examiner objects to these claims because they include method steps in an apparatus style claim and are thus in improper form.

Claims 43-57 have also been rejected under 35 USC § 112, 2d paragraph. Because Applicants have cancelled these claims (as mentioned above for reasons other than patentability), this rejection is believed to be moot. Applicants respectfully assert that new claims 58-75 are clear and definite.

Claims 43-57 have additionally been rejected as unpatentable in view of one or more of U.S. Patent No. 5,944,537 to Smith et al. ("Smith"), U.S. Patent No. 6,140,219 to Dennison ("Dennison"), and U.S. Patent No. 5,994,766 to Shenoy ("Shenoy"). To the extent this rejection might be applied to new claims 58-75, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The present invention is generally directed to a resilient contact structure having a base portion attached to a conductive area on a substrate, a tip portion disposed away from the substrate and the conductive area, and a beam portion between the base portion and the tip portion. New claims 58 and 68 are directed to such a contact structure in which the width of the beam portion becomes smaller as one moves from the base portion to the tip portion. As described in the specification, the narrowing width of the beam portion improves the contact

structure's ability to withstand forces applied to the contact structure. (E.g., specification, pg. 19, lines 10-22.)

Although Smith illustrates a resilient, conductive contact structure (e.g., Figure 12), nothing in Smith teaches or suggests that the beam portion of its contact be made such that its width narrows from the base portion to the tip portion. Smith teaches that the pointed shapes illustrated in Figures 16-19 of Smith are for the tip portion of the Smith contact. (E.g., Smith col. 8, lines 49-64.) As described in Smith, the purpose of these pointed shapes is to break through oxides and thereby form a better electrical connection with another electronics entity. Nothing in Smith, however, addresses the need to improve the contact structure's ability to withstand forces applied to the structure. Consequently, Smith neither discloses nor suggests narrowing the width of the beam portion of a contact structure between its base portion (i.e., the portion secured to the electronics device) and tip portion. All of the other art of record likewise fails to teach or suggest such a feature. Therefore, new independent claims 58 and 68, as well as the claims that depend therefrom, patentably distinguish over the prior art of record.

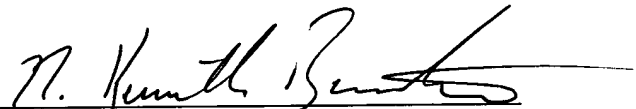
In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a discussion with Applicants' attorney would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (925) 456-3915.

Applicants have filed papers requesting continued examination of this application and providing for payment of the attendant continued examination fee. Although Applicants believe that no additional fees are due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, Applicants hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge any fee required in connection with the filing of this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-0285 (order no. P84-US).

Respectfully submitted,

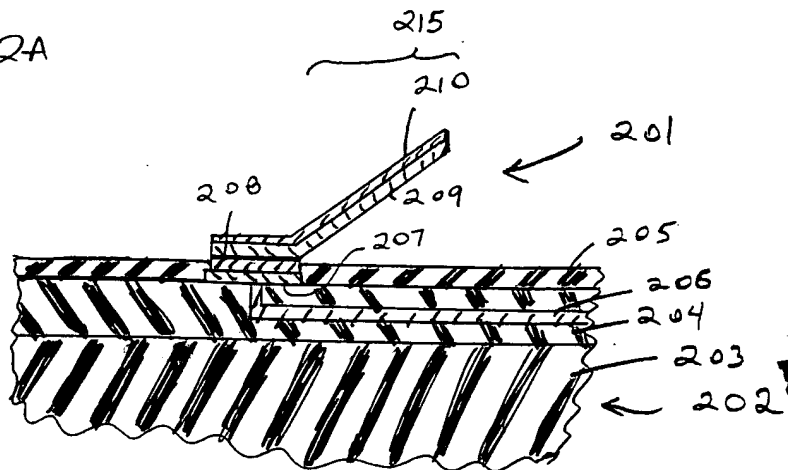
Date: September 24, 2001

By:


N. Kenneth Burraston
Reg. No. 39,923

FormFactor, Inc.
Legal Department
5666 La Ribera St.
Livermore, CA 94550
925-294-4300
925-294-8147 Fax

FIG. 2A



AU MK
12/10/01
SN

FIG. 2B

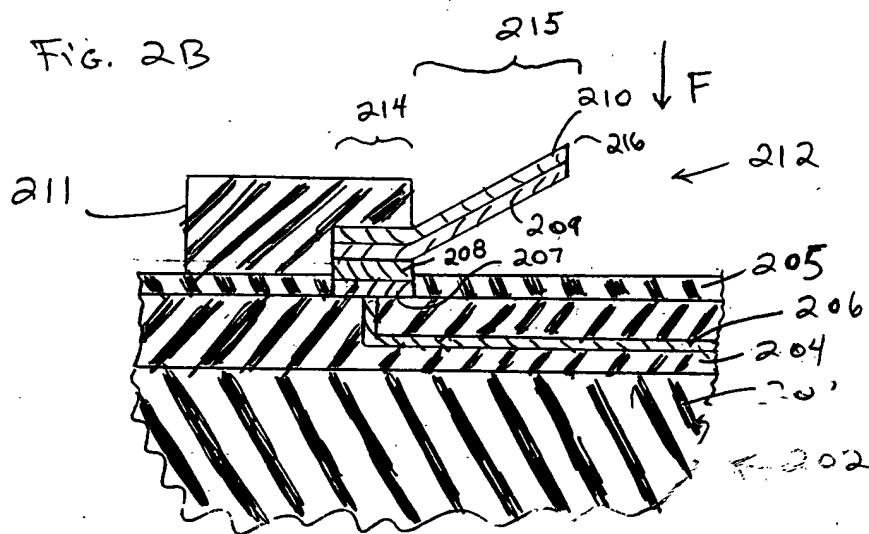
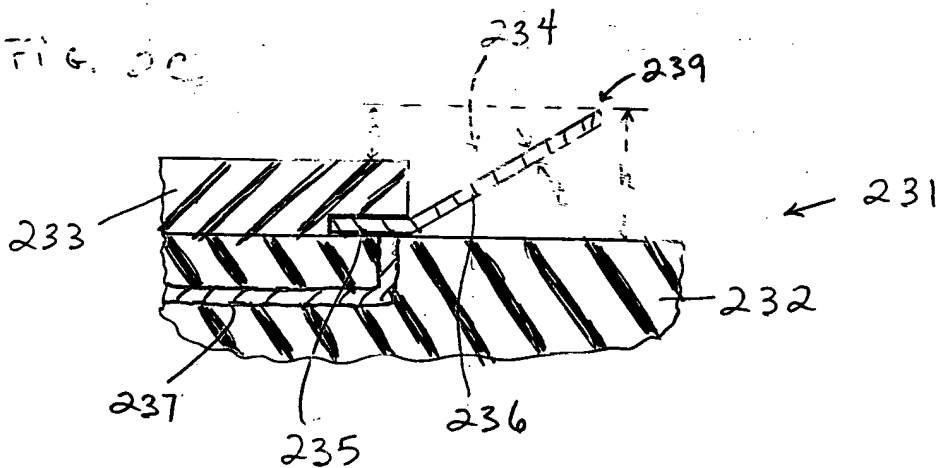


FIG. 2C



13-782	500 SHEETS FILLER	5 SQUARE
42-381	50 SHEETS EYE-EASE®	5 SQUARE
42-382	100 SHEETS EYE-EASE®	5 SQUARE
42-383	200 SHEETS EYE-EASE®	5 SQUARE
42-392	100 RECYCLED WHITE	5 SQUARE
42-399	200 RECYCLED WHITE	5 SQUARE

Made in U.S.A.

National Linen

OK
12/10/01
SN

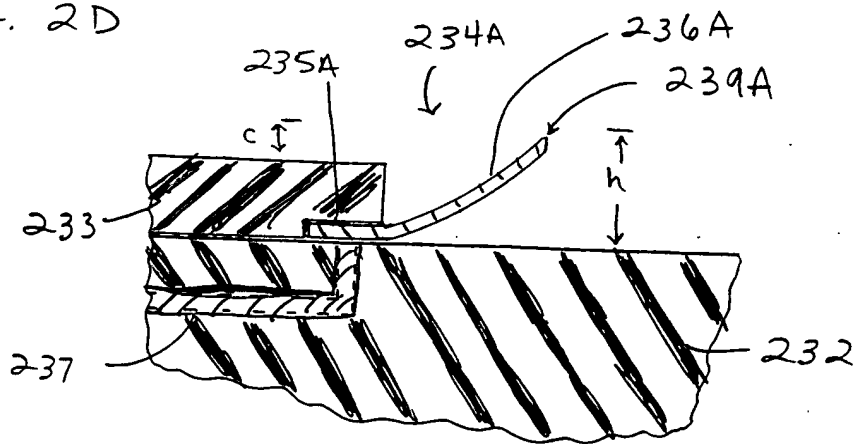


Fig. 2E

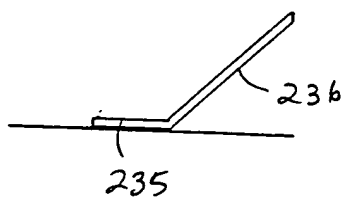


FIG. 2F

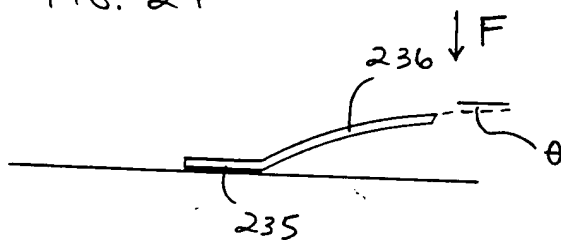


Fig. 2G

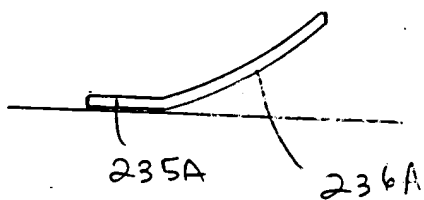


Fig. 2 H

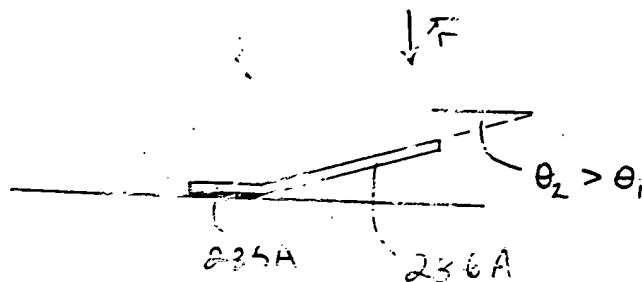




FIG. 3A

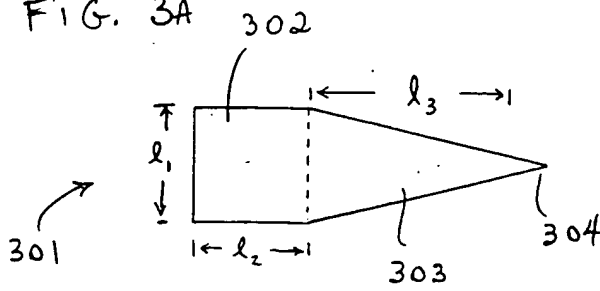


FIG. 3B

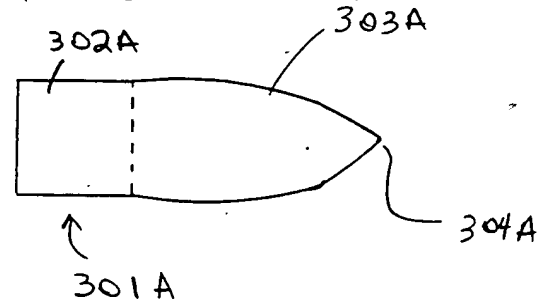


FIG. 4

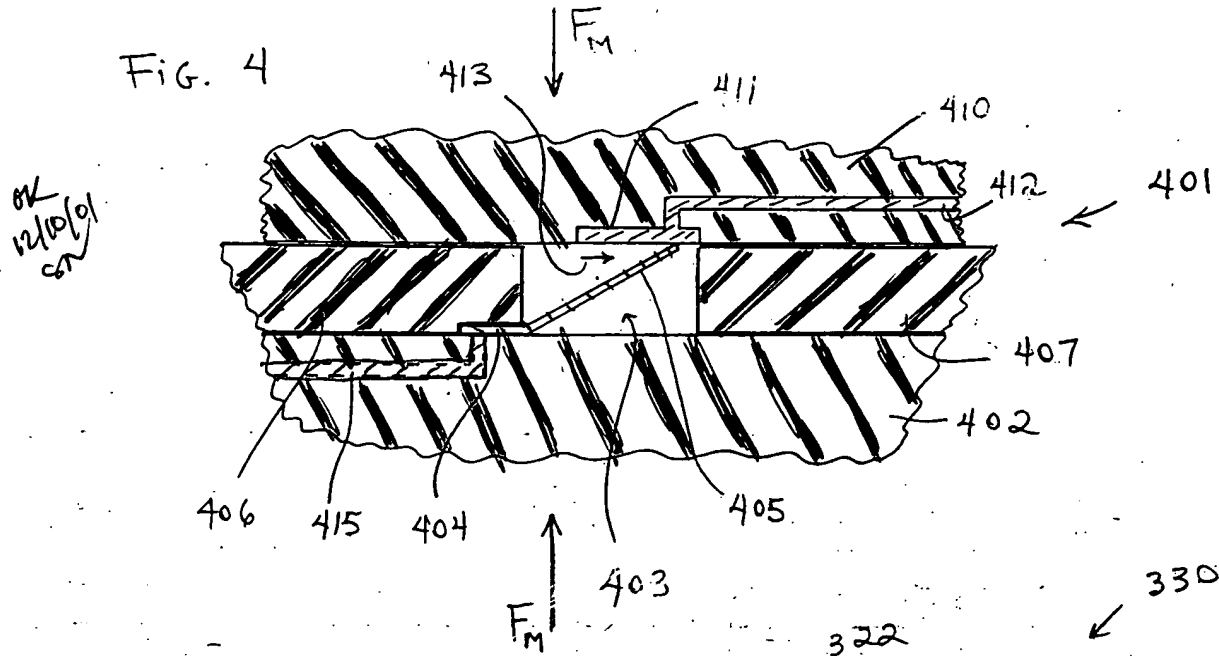


FIG. 3C

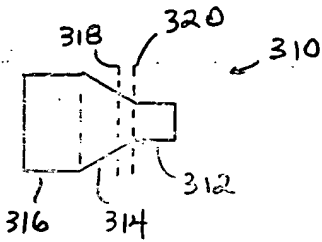


FIG. 3D

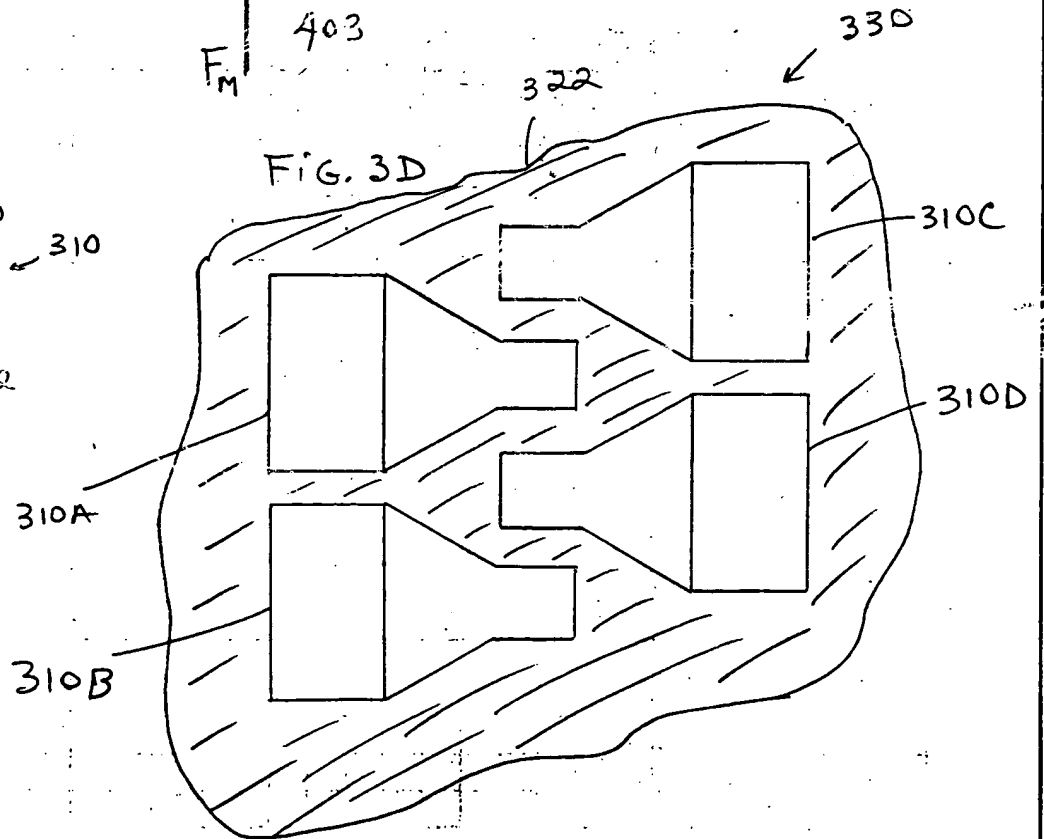


FIG. 6A

ALL OK
VW/601
SN

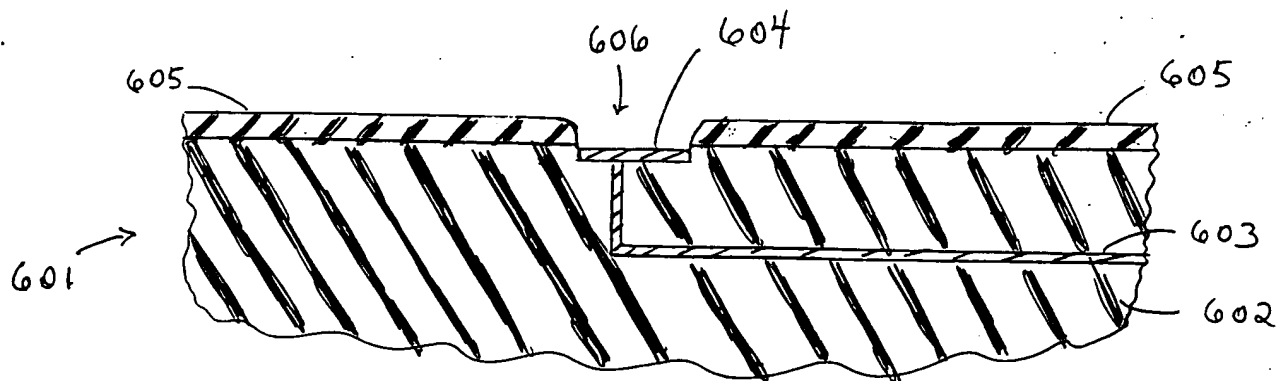


FIG. 6B

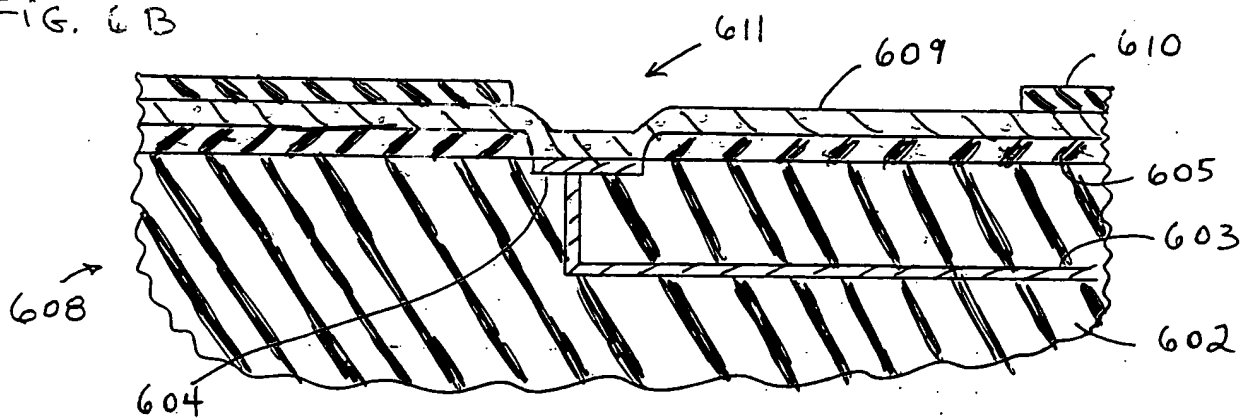


FIG. 6C

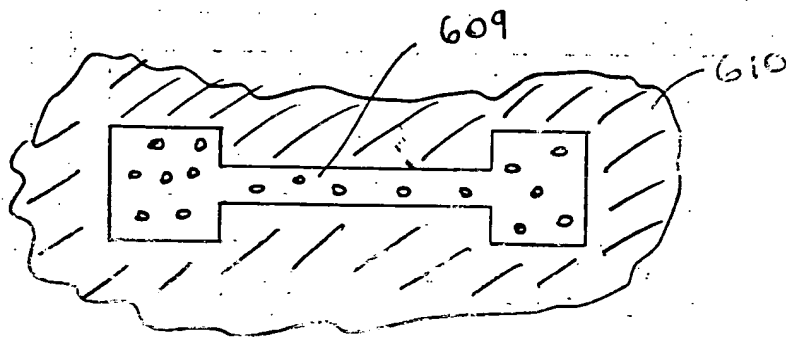
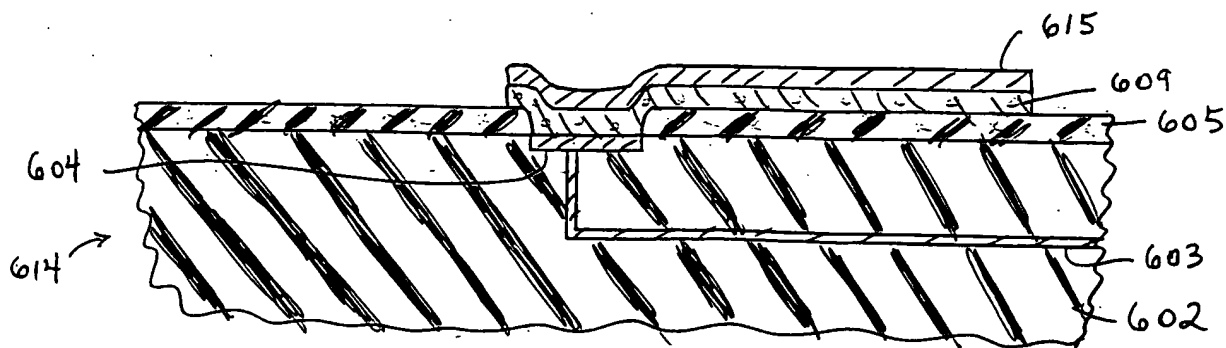


FIG. 6D



ALL OR
12/10/01
SN

FIG. 6E

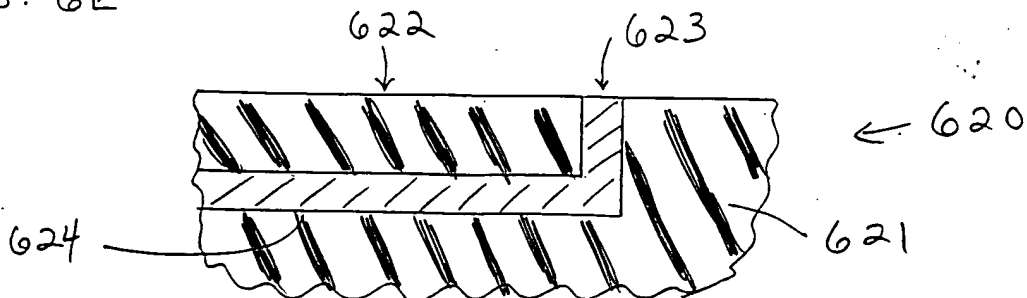


FIG. 6F

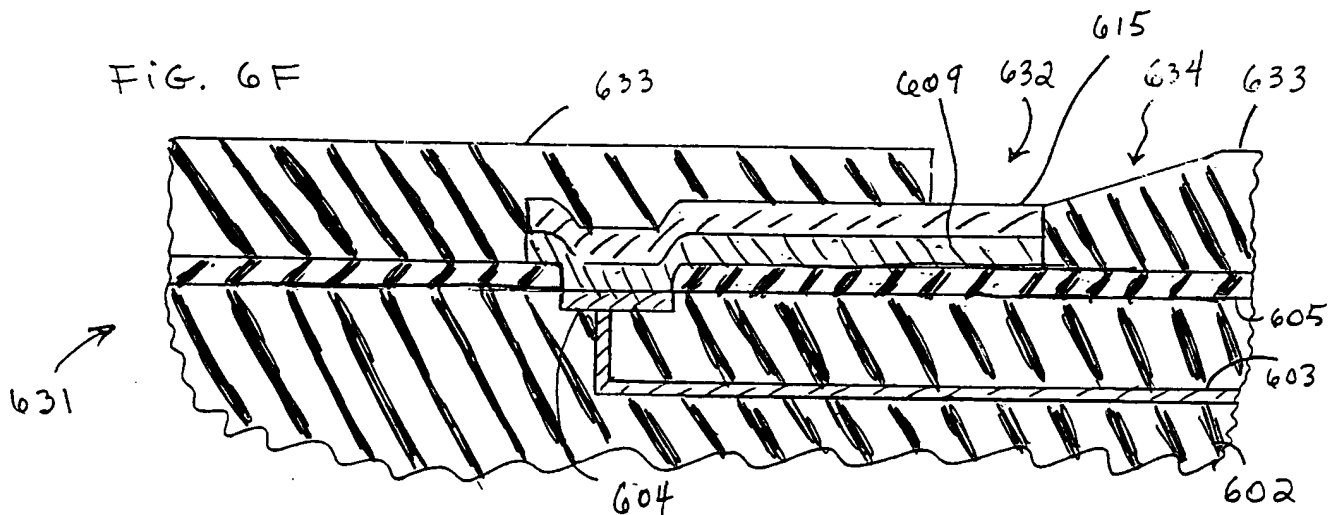


FIG. 6G

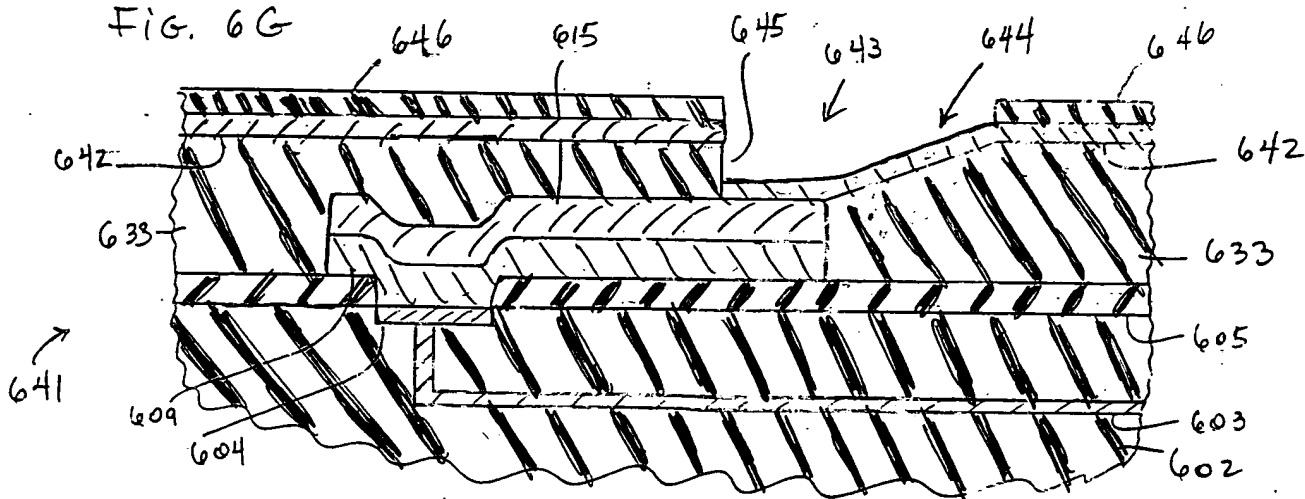
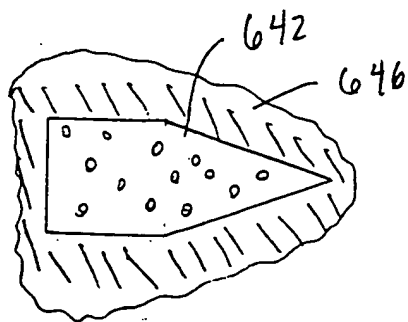


FIG. 6H



ALL OK
12/10/01
SN

FIG. 6I

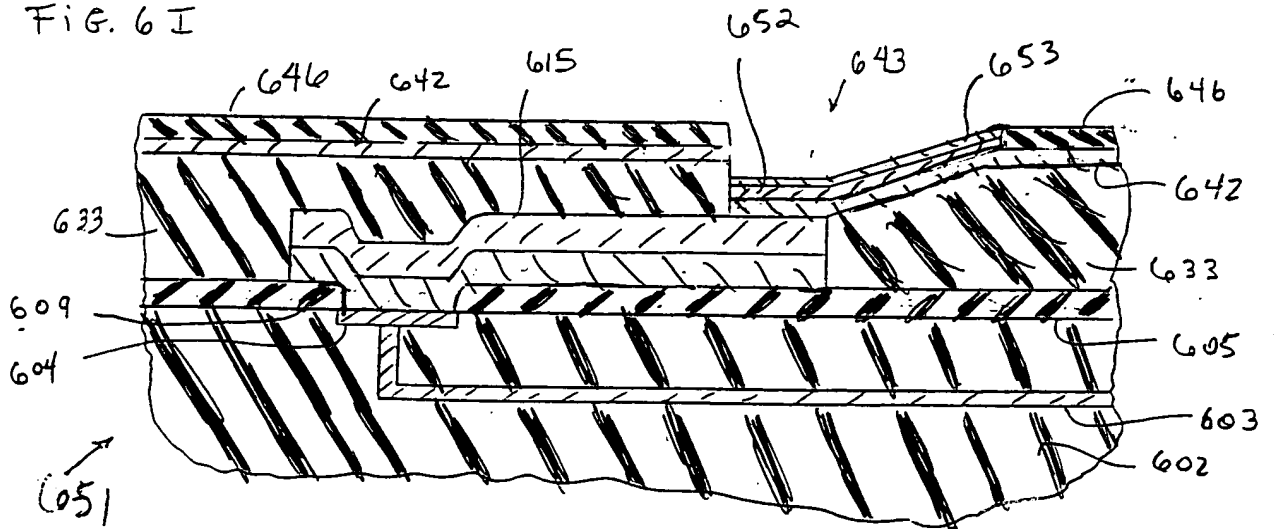


FIG. 6J

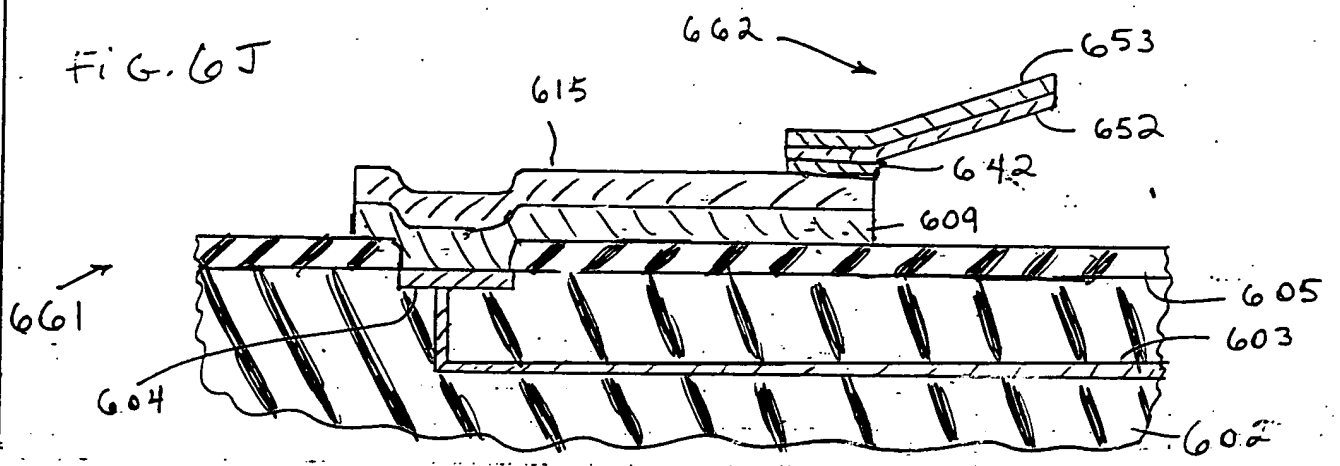


FIG. 6K

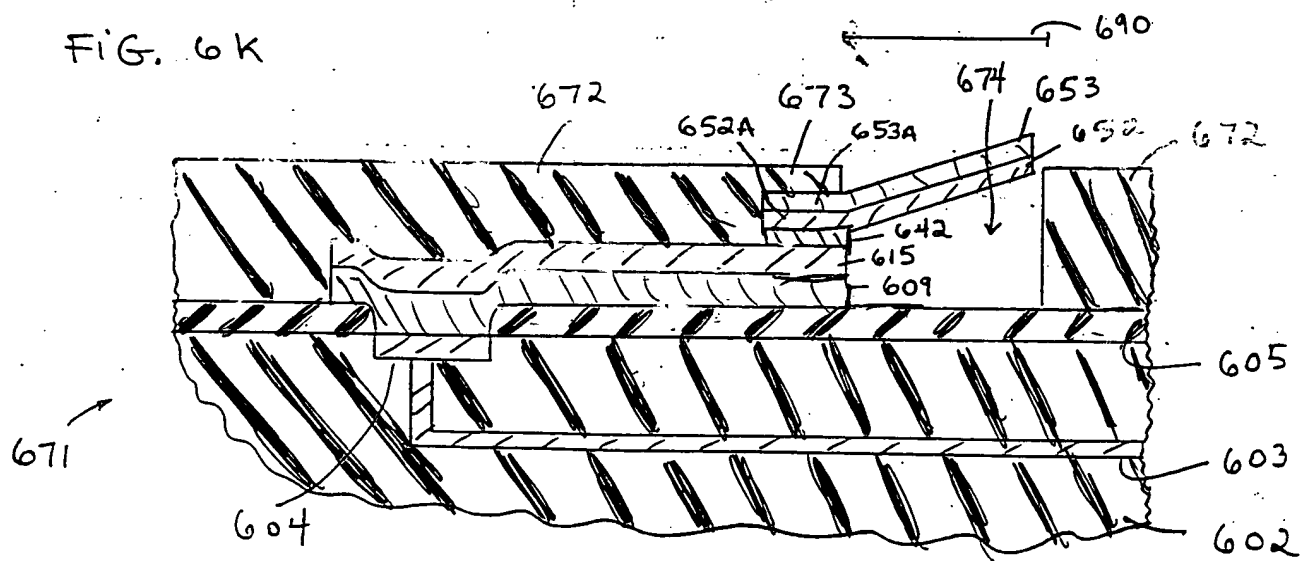




FIG. 6L

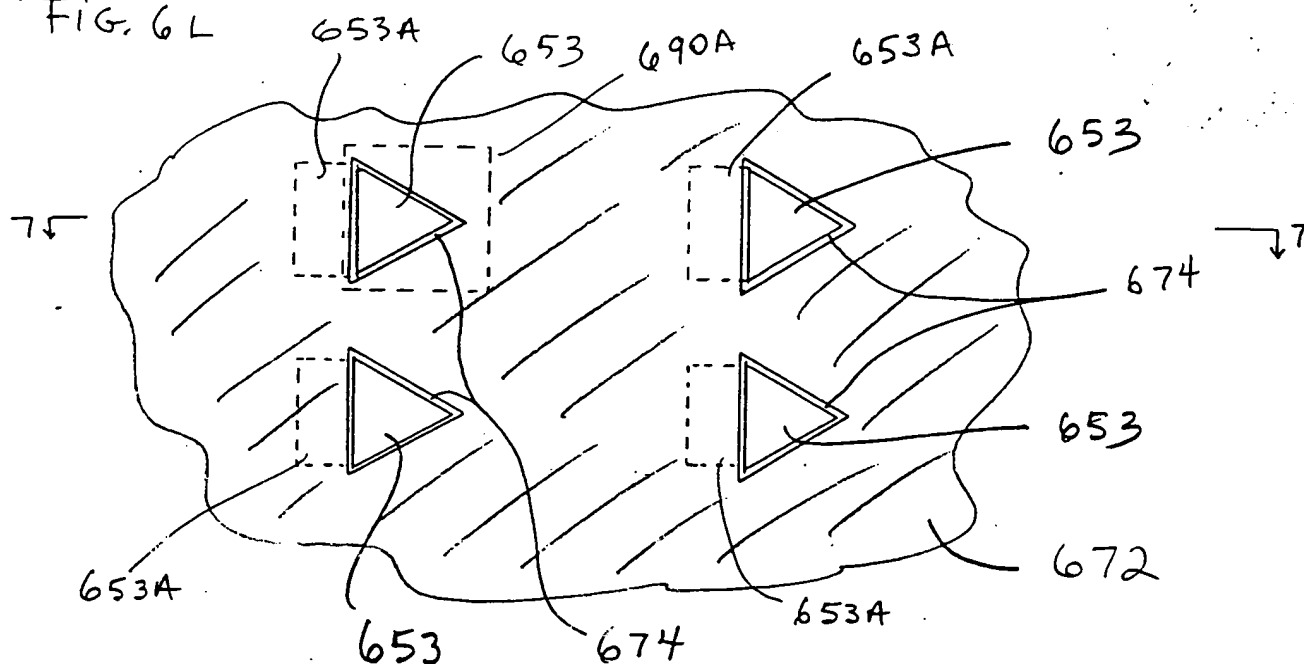


FIG. 7A

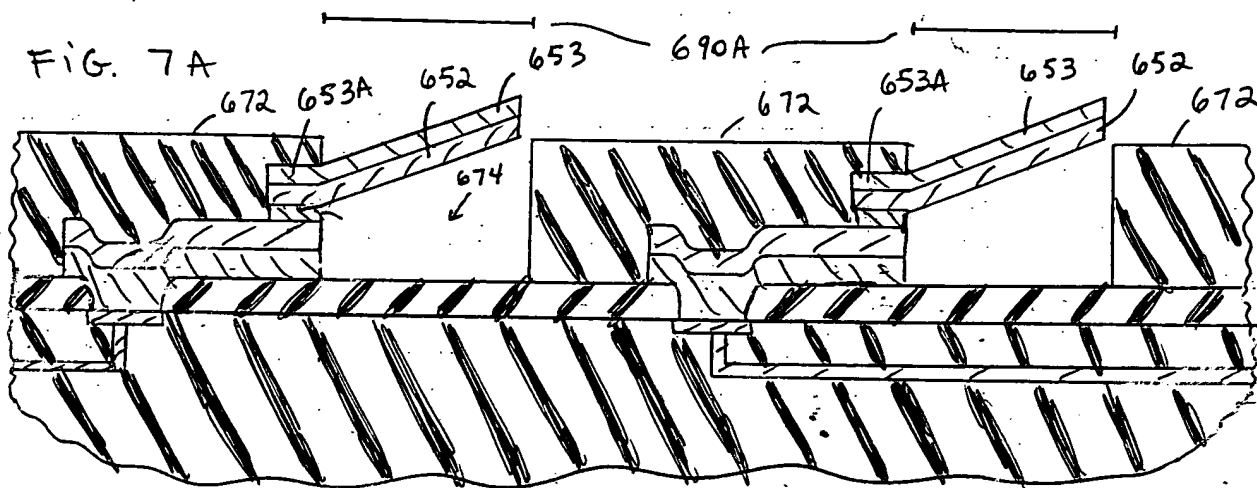
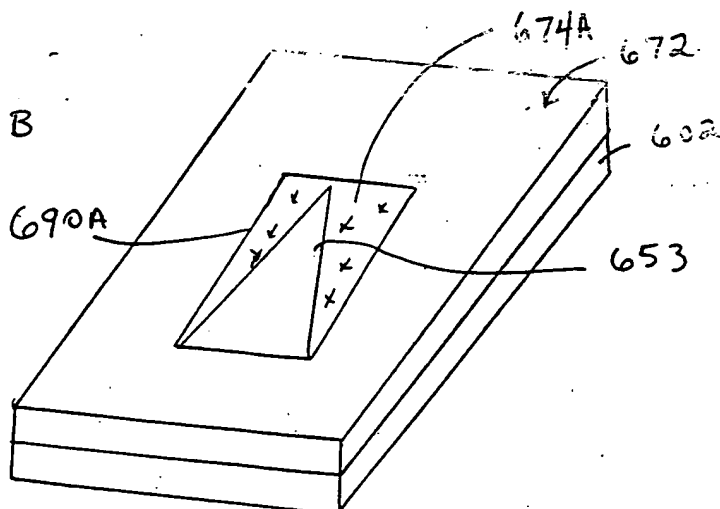


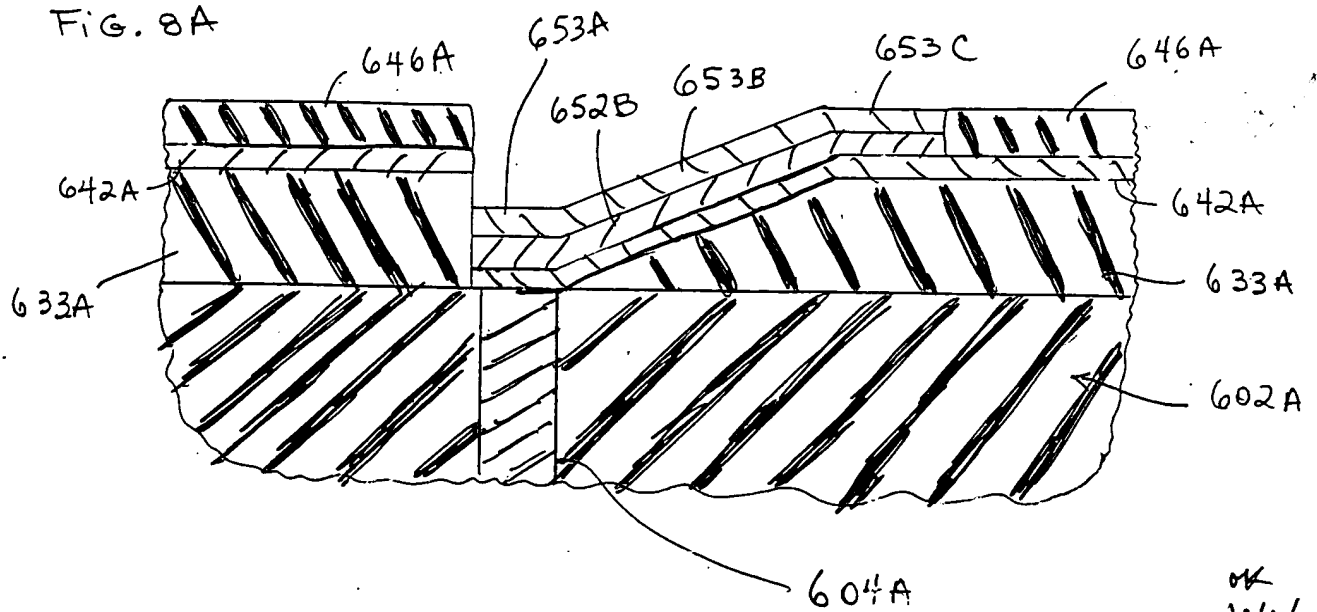
FIG. 7B



OK
12/10/01
SN

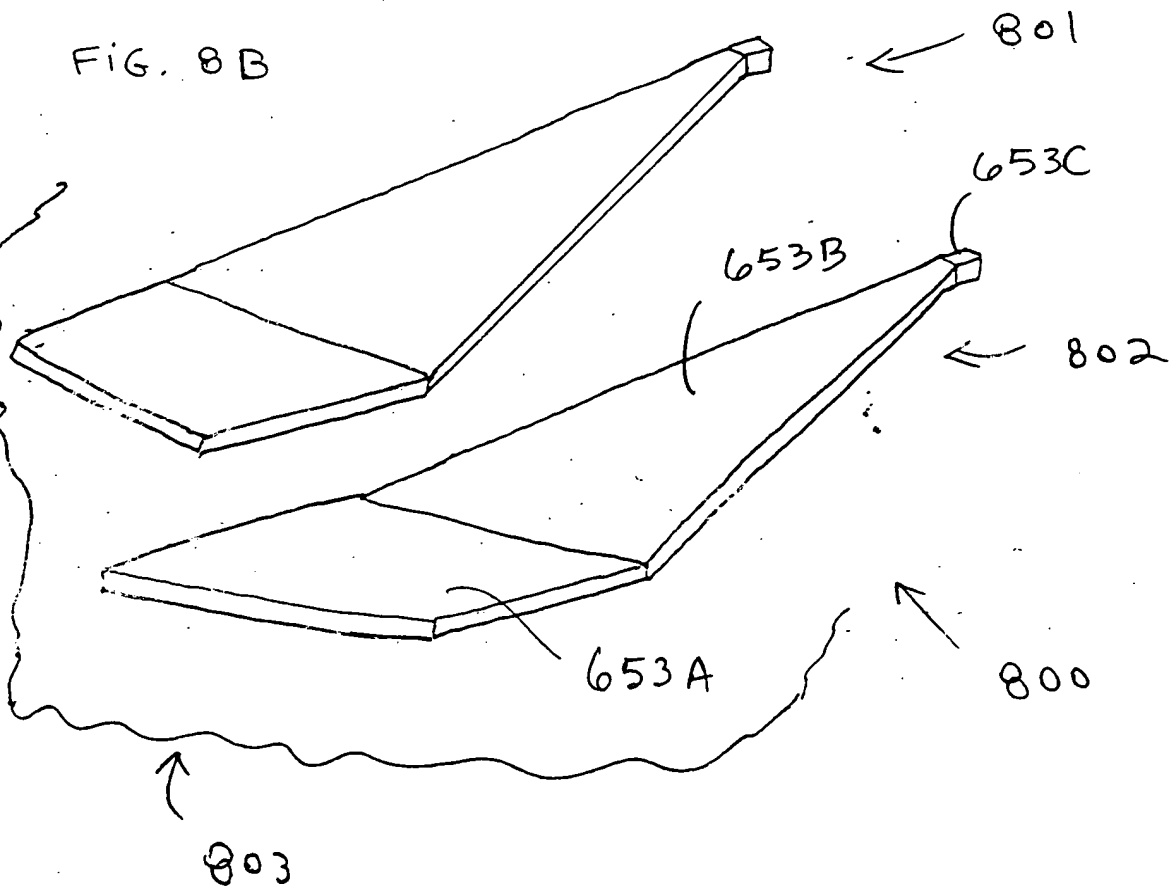


FIG. 8A



OK
12/10/01
SN

FIG. 8B



13-782 500 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-381 50 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-382 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-383 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-384 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-385 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-386 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-387 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-388 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-389 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-390 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-391 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-392 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-393 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-394 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-395 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-396 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-397 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-398 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-399 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 42-400 100 SHEETS FULLER 15 SQUARE
 Made in U.S.A.

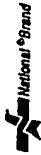


FIG. 9A

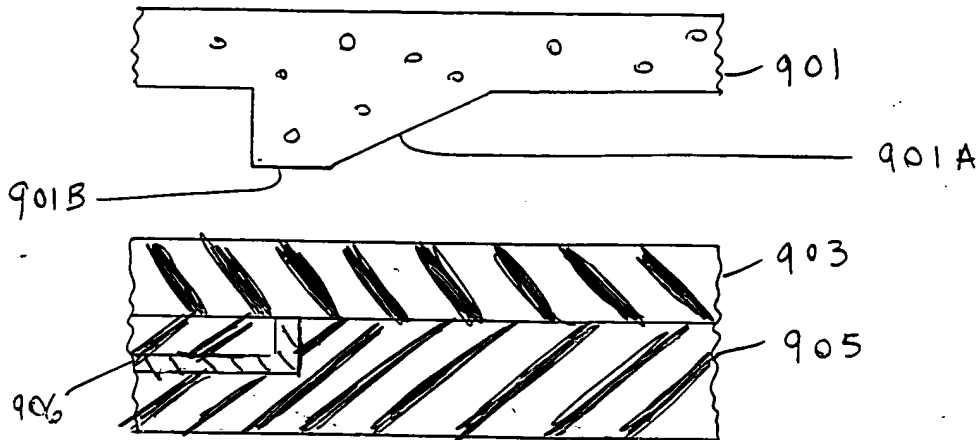
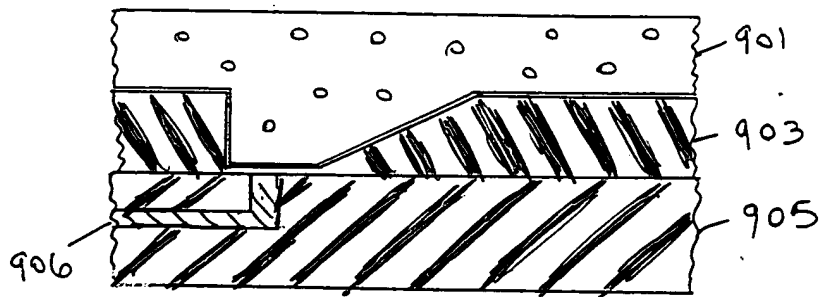


FIG. 9B



ALL OK
 12/10/01
 SN

FIG. 9C

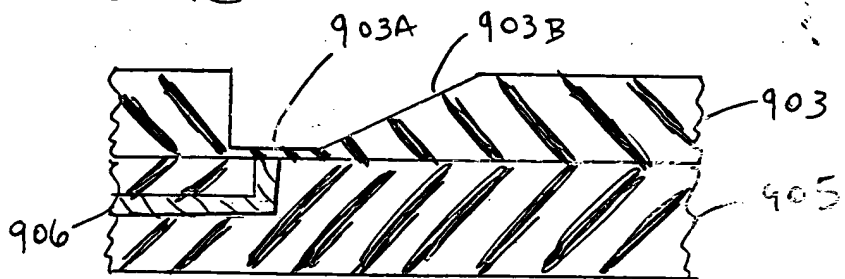


FIG. 9D

